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Malus bonum ubi se simulat, tunc est pessimus.
PUB. SYRUS.

Blackest that wretch must be, who dares to feign
With soul corrupt a heart removed from stain.
OAIEN.

No man, we are convinced, has gone through life without having suffered from the fraud and hypocrisy of his fellow-men, and without having occasion to lament that society can not go on in a just and equable course, without having recourse to these base and contemptible arts. But hypocrisy is a vice, which pre-

vails more or less in every community, and in almost every set of men. There are always to be found individuals, who prefer attaining their ends by sly and serpent means, neglecting the open and direct road of truth and honorable feeling.

Perhaps there is none, who has not in his life been guilty of this vice in some degree or another. Innumerable are the petty frauds we daily play upon one another; and innumerable are the occasions on which we find it expedient to dissemble, or appear to be that which in reality we are not. Honesty would after all be the best policy; and did we pursue the right road, the occasions for dissembling would be less frequent, and the temptations to deviate from strict propriety would diminish as we advanced. Our past reflections would not be embittered by the consideration that we had so often acted the hypocrite, generally

to no purpose whatsoever. Successful villainy has its intolerable stings of remorse; but the gratuitous exercise of our evil propensities, or the performance of evil deeds without deriving any advantage from the undertaking, must add to these stings the still less tolerable pangs of regret and of disappointment.

But among all the various forms and modifications of hypocrisy, none can be more detestable than that which apes for its schemes of villainy the appearance of uprightness and of piety. "It is the ambition of the daemon, counterfeiting the aspirations of the angel." It is the most determined attack that can be made upon the citadel of religion; it carries its assault into the very centre of its antagonists' camp, and under the garb of a friend, lets in its base allies to plunder & destroy. The villain who acts openly in his wickedness may claim more of our respect than a man of this

stamp. The former can be resisted; — the latter, "lurking in the horse" of external piety, "enters in dishonorable triumph." His mark is unseen; his points of attack unknown. He winds himself into every counsel; he plants his artillery against the weakest part, and every human effort bows before his progress. Compared with such conduct, the petty frauds which are forbold practised every day, seem to sink to nothing. But this one mighty crime absorbs them all within itself. It contains the germ and the blossom of every evil and of every abomination. It blooms verdant as the groves of spring to the eye, And puts forth flowers lovely as thought can paint, but like the shirt of Nessus, it blasts the pilgrim that reposes in its shade. Dealing with such a subtle enemy, the common strength of man cannot stand up against it; it requires the panoply of heaven to shield us from its attacks, and resist its endea-

=vors. It needs a celestial monitor to
warn us of its approach, and keep us
from being deceived by its appearance.

There is something peculiarly base
in conduct of this kind, inasmuch as
it makes its assault upon all the good
feelings of our nature, and preys upon
those emotions of the heart which lead
us to place implicit reliance upon those
who appear to us to claim kindred with
heaven. We may endure to behold the
fiend in all his native ugliness; but
there is a deeper shudder experienced
to behold him scaling the vault of
the sky, robed as an immortal sera-
=aph, and mingling in the radiance
of the noon-tide sun. The man who
has been detected in such hypocrisy,
who has dropt the mask, and been
seen in his own deformity, should
be avoided like the serpent. And it
not unfrequently happens, that una-
=ble to support the character which
he has been assumed becomes apparent
by some inconsistency which at one

betrays the reality. It requires consummate caution to live unsuspected when the heart is thus black. The many who attempt it, with weak heads, and incautious conduct, are almost always sure to expose themselves and to defeat their own designs. It does not require more than an ordinary share of discernment to penetrate into their ~~designs~~ intentions, and to strip the vizard from the face that would vainly seek to hide behind it its ghastly deformity.

It is however difficult to state precisely the means by which this detection is to be effected, and the manner in which their hypocrisy is evident. The little proofs which might be adduced are never observed by the generality of men. Were all men deeply discerning, no one would dare to dissemble his real character. But as it is, something rather more marked is necessary to bring the secret simulator into open shame and con-

-viction; to stamp at once his enormities, and to hold him up to the world in his true colors.

Of the two extremes of hypocrisy, the affectation of humility is more insidious, more dangerous, because more difficult to detect, than the disgusting display of religious pretenders, which is yet of the deepest injury to the reputation and cause of Christianity. The first mentioned vice, however disgusting in its nature, approaches the weak side of frail humanity in a form too agreeable, not to meet with a ready reception. The upright heart nauseates flattery, but even the purest and most exalted soul is not proof against its secret advances. We cannot hate those who praise us; and our judgement is blinded by our self love. Humility and submission are implied praise; they have the appearance of respectful submission to our acknowledged superiority.

This worming hypocrisy is always secure, for, when detected we scorn to trample on the thing of earth. Thus secure in its own littleness, the insect crawls on and is wrapt in its coil, till the sunshine of fortune, which warms alike the worthy and undeserving, enables it to throw off the mask of deception; it bursts from the shell it loathes, and spreads its gay wings and glittering colors in the full splendor of the meridian tide.

Religious hypocrisy, more easily seen through, and despised, perhaps as much from the evil as the generous principles of our nature, is full as pernicious in its example and effects. When such persons as would have been welcomed with open arms by the rump parliament of Cromwell, acquire a station of prominence in the community, the purity of Christianity suffers by the abuse of her hypocritical votary. Although nothing is more clear than that the per-

version of what is good is no argument against its excellence, the mind of man is too easily influenced by exceptions. And in the matter of religion, as we have already hinted, we have reason to fear that the slights thrown on religion by the usual practices of pretenders are to be sought for in the sallow shades of the dark side of our nature, which are wont to colour every operation of the understanding, even when deliberating on the souls best interests. Atheists take hold of all such abuses with malignant and diabolical avidity.

SIMULATOR passes among a few of his acquaintance for a very devout pious and liberal person. among the majority however he is considered as a hypocritical enthusiast in religion, and mean and contemptible by nature. Simulator always talks of his experience in the trials of this life and the credit with which he has overcome them; but while

he gives all the honor to his maker, he glories in his humility. He says "I have resisted the evil, but I do not boast of it, I ascribe the praise and the merit to God." In his charity, Simulator gathers the contributions of others and suffers them, who are relieved, to bless him as their benefactor. Here also, he refines on Hypocrisy. When people express their gratitude for the kindnesses he has shewn them, he says "I forget that" and takes care to repeat his assertion, till the objects of his oppressive benevolence are made properly sensible of his disinterestedness.

The ~~affe~~ boast of humility is of all other species of hypocrisy, the most disgusting and barefaced. A child detects the paradox. It falls under the same genius of absurdities with the affectation of a woman who assumes infantine airs and childish simplicity. The affectation of nature

is the oldest of all canting.

Let us not however be misled. let not the vain pretensions of some professors make us ashamed of the anchor of our hope. When the veil of time shall be unrolled. we shall see with unclouded eyes the nature of the hold which such blasphemers have on the Rock of Ages. When the thunder rolls and the lightnings flash around its summit, when the gulph of despair is yawning beneath, and its doped billows chafe and roar for their prey, the slimy tread of hypocrisy shall fail, and the vail of its impious mockery shall be drowned, in the roar of the waters that will come over the soul. Earth is one wide theatre, where deceit displays her masquerades, as her successive groups of actors appear and pass from the scene. Let us look forward with the steady sight of faith

on that pure flood, with which deception
can never amalgamate; where the Eye
of eternity pours its everliving beams
in the essence of uncreated day, in
which the soul disenthralled expands in
its deathless destiny and seraphs drawing
ing the breath of inspiration, pour forth
the pure hosanna, surrounding the throne
of life, while heaven trembles with ecstacy

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